

(Approx. 549 words)

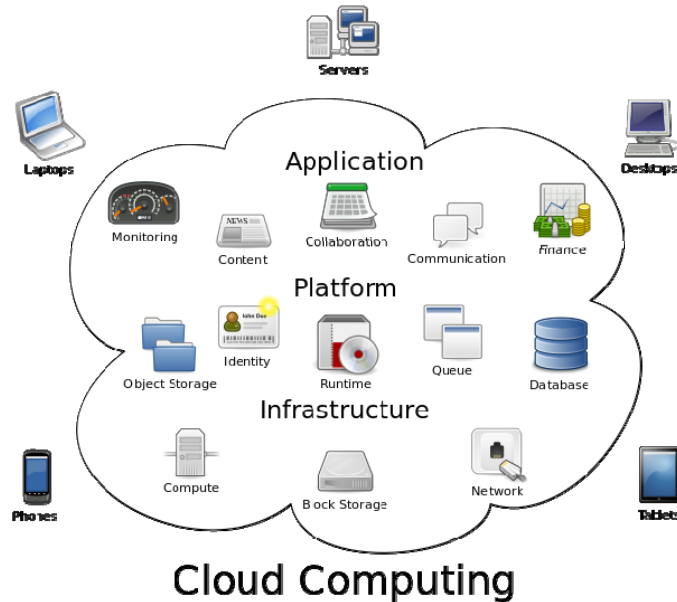
Cloud Computing

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The Retired Geek Technical Tips for the Non-Technical “Over 50” Crowd

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Cloud Computing

While the above image may look complicated, simply defined, cloud computing is the practice of using a network of remote servers hosted on the internet to store, manage, and process your data, rather than keeping it on your own computer.

Understanding the idea behind cloud computing may be simple, but getting on board with it seems to be difficult for some (though I really don't understand why). Hundreds of millions of people use cloud computing and don't even realize it, with email programs like Gmail, Yahoo! Mail, Outlook.com, etc. You do not install any programs for these on your computer; they are instead hosted on remote servers at the provider.

The goal of cloud computing is to apply traditional supercomputing, or high-performance computing power, normally used by military and research facilities, to perform tens of trillions of computations per second, in consumer-oriented applications. These applications are things like financial portfolios, email, corporate and individual data and they store and deliver personalized information to and from the users (you and me).

To do this, cloud computing uses networks of large groups of servers, typically running low-cost consumer PC technology with specialized connections to spread data-processing chores across them. This shared IT infrastructure contains large pools of systems that are linked together. Often, virtualization techniques are used to maximize

the power of cloud computing. But you don't need to know these things...you just need to know that cloud computing is safe, effective, and keeps us from losing data on our own computers.

Some of the old file-sharing programs that existed years ago were actually early forms of cloud computing as well. Data, movies, pictures and music were hosted by other computers. You logged in and were able to watch, listen or view the data from the comfort of your own home, while someone else hosted it. But now cloud computing has taken off and gone to the next level, being a system of computers linked up together hosting, serving and storing data so users can use that data without even needing to install or upgrade their own computers.

For many of us early adopters, cloud computing is a concept we've used for quite some time. But now the cat is out of the bag, so to speak, and it has become the new "in" thing in computing, both for businesses and individuals.

To better understand cloud computing, try out Dropbox, which is a (FREE) prime example of cloud computing. Dropbox is the most well known cloud service today and it lets you store and access your files from anywhere...on the web, on your hard drive, or on all your mobile devices. Here's how it works:

1. Go to Dropbox on the web at <https://db.tt/7rEut4dJ>.
2. Install Dropbox on your computer or mobile device.
3. Throw your files into the Dropbox folder... it's always right there on your device.
4. Add Dropbox to your mobile devices by visiting the iTunes Store or Android Store.

Now your files go everywhere you do. Change a file on the web, on your computer, or on your mobile device and it updates on every device where you've installed Google Drive. Share, collaborate, or work alone: your files...your choice.